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WHAT'S UP THIS WEEK

Advice for overseas assignments...notes and comments from here and there...a couple of "saga" stories...where we stand in spending money for advertising...handling information about that eruption of Mount St. Helen...and a number of other goodies.

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WHAT WE'RE SPENDING

Despite the fact that we are charged with passing information on to farmers and the public, there are always questions about how that differs from advertising...about how much USDA does spend on advertising...about how much we spend on public information. Someday, we hope, there will be enough understanding to avoid the issue. But meanwhile....

Latest query came from Congress...asking the question in several parts for four years. Three types of advertising were called "agency recruiting," "public service," and "program promotion." Totals ran this way: For 1978, \$39,000 for agency recruiting; \$96,000 for public service; and \$7,030,000 for program promotion. In 1979, the figures were \$67,000; \$808,000, and \$5,675,000. We had to provide estimates for fiscal years 1980 and 1981.

Most of the program promotion funds came from the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation which advertises availability of farm crop insurance.

With the same question came another having to do with public info staff years and expenditures. Total spent in 1978 was \$26,495,000; total staff years amounted to 823. In 1979 those figures were \$31,090,000 and 883.

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ON WHAT'S TO EAT?

By now you've probably seen the 1979 Yearbook of Agriculture, called "What's to Eat?" Also you probably know that it's been one of the most talked about yearbooks ever printed.

In a nutshell, many--not all--farm-oriented Congressmen dislike the book; about as many farm people like it as dislike it. Educators like it, youth organization people like it. General reaction in the press has been good...in fact, despite some local reviews that have panned it, Jack Hayes, Yearbook editor, says most clippings he has seen favor the book.

During the first five weeks copies were on sale by the Superintendent of Documents of GPO, 6,300 books were sold--that's at \$4.50 each. By now the number probably is much higher.

Now if by chance you haven't seen the book...by all means get one. In fact, there's a 25% discount on all orders for 100 or more when you order through GPO.

As one reviewer wrote, the book is "about the tradition, the importance, the reality--indeed, the glory of farming. For an audience that is increasingly remote from farming, for youngsters tempted to believe food originates in supermarkets and McDonald's, this book tries hard to bring the gift of understanding and respect."

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DOES IT PAY TO
ADVERTISE?

Our second saga this week also has to do with publications... this time though those pubs distributed during the last 6 months by the Consumer Information Center (CIC).

Last year, CIC distributed 4.76 million USDA pubs in the whole year. Now...since Oct. 1, they've moved 5 million.

It's been a strange development. The first quarter distribution of USDA pubs came to 1,559,958, a 21% increase over the 1,286,869 in the first quarter of the previous fiscal year. Total pubs distributed were slightly less than the same period a year earlier.

Then something happened. In January all govt. pubs took off in distribution...jumping from 2.9 million in January, up from 1,683,326 the previous January. Then that went to 4.2 million in February and then to 4.4 million in March. USDA pubs were caught in the same increase...to 2,779,800 even after a cut-back in promotion and listings.

Outcome has been that USDA has no more postage money. Folks who write CIC for the remainder of the year asking for pubs that happen to be from USDA will get a note saying they're no longer available. (Yep, we're working on the problem!)

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ERUPTING EDITORIALY

From Bob Lake, Forest Service, we hear that an editorial in the "Columbian," Vancouver, Washington, wrote: "Forest Service personnel aren't trained for volcanoes..." but "...information officer Jim Unterwegner and his staff seemed to operate not on the premise that the least information is the best information, but rather that the public is curious about this most remarkable series of geologic events and should, through the news media, have access to available information."

Way to go, Jim. We've all enjoyed reading and hearing about Mount St. Helen.

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D.C. ACE GETTING
READY

Larry Quinn, GPA, tells us the annual ACE-GPA workshop will be held May 22-23 at the 4-H Center here in town. Larry says the main topic is likely to be "Trends and Techniques." He and others on the program committee have some interesting speakers already lined up. More later....

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FROM TWO FAR-AWAYERS...Former inf type Jon Greeneisen, now a Denver exec. with the Central Bank for Cooperatives, sent us a copy of the World Development Letter (a bi-weekly AID newsletter) which contained some wisdom from one-time USDA inf director Lyle Webster.

Lyle had been asked what he had learned in his many years of work abroad and how he might handle his next foreign assignment. First, he said, he would approach his work with tolerance and humility toward his third world co-workers and recognition that all knowledge does not reside in the U.S.

That would have been quite a mouthful, but then he also said, among other things: "I would never forget that my clients have a culture and way of living that have met many of the intellectual and spiritual needs of the people for centuries. I would learn the local language..." for "...no matter how badly..." we "...would be respected for trying."

Lyle also said he would live simply: "Foreign consultants need not live in village huts, but living in luxury often offends their co-workers."

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...AND TWO FAR OFFERS On other matters international, we received some notes from John Woods, Bangkok, the other day which outlined a couple of papers John has prepared. One, "Agricultural Extension and Communication--Why, What and for Whom," gives his ideas of a development program and how comm fits into it; the other, "The Process of Communication," runs through the process and again melds it with development programs.

If you want a copy, write "Inside..." and we'll try to make a Xerox copy for you.

Then a note from Bill Ward, Cornell, indicates that he's back in the U.S., only to take off almost immediately again for Spain where he will try golfing for a couple of weeks!

Bill has been at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Nigeria for the last 3 months...says one of the jobs he had was to write a 32-page booklet about a rice research project for Sierra Leone. It came off the press--including the writing--in 10 days.

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STILL PLEASED

Claude Gifford, GPA, notes that that non-USDA official is still at it...saying, "It's a pleasure to be here..." in all his speeches. Obviously he--or his speechwriter--doesn't read "Inside...."

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AL TO RETIRE

Al Horton, who's been acting director of inf for the Agricultural Marketing Service, says he plans to retire soon. Al has chalked up 30 years with the govt.

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STRUCTURES FINAL

USDA will hold its last structure hearing April 29-30, this time in Washington, D.C. You couldn't say everyone has been opting for the opportunity to "advance" this meeting. But press activities will be handled by the News Center.

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JOB HUNTING? TRY ESCS

The Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service is hunting a writer-editor, GS-5/7 with promotion potential to a GS-11. Deadline for applications is April 28...contact Phil Lando (202) 447-2427, ESCS, PD, OB, Rm. 1459-South Bldg., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250, and mention vacancy #ESCS-IS-80-770.

The job is to write news articles, press releases and help in developing feature materials for magazines, newsletters and other publications. Individual hired will edit copy and proofread text and tabular materials, suggest visual ideas for stories.

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LOOKING FOR A JOB

Norma Holmes, who worked some years ago in the old Office of Information, dropped by the other day seeking employment again. Norma was a staff assistant to then assistant director of information J.K. McClarren. She wrote a number of leaflets, pamphlets, press releases, speeches, and training materials then.

She is hunting for D.C. employment and can be reached at 573-2550 or at 7914 Roswell Drive, Falls Church, Va. 22043.

